



Massachusetts Snowmobile Safety Laws

The following abstract summarizes some important Massachusetts snowmobile laws. For the complete law refer to Massachusetts General Law (MGL), Chapter 90B (Sections 20-35) and 323 Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) 3.00.

Age Restrictions

- ◆ A person under 16 ½ years of age must be directly supervised by an adult when crossing a public way.
- ◆ A person between 10 - 14 years of age may operate under direct adult supervision while in preparation for, or while a participant in, a sanctioned race, rally or organized event which has been approved by a municipal permitting authority.
- ◆ A person under 10 years of age may operate an age/size appropriate snowmobile, 150 cc or less, while under direct supervision on lands on which the operator is domiciled.

Safety Equipment

Persons operating or riding on a snowmobile or attached sled, tube, or similar device shall wear an approved helmet. Each snowmobile must be equipped with an adequate muffler designed to reduce unusual or excessive noise and noxious fumes. After sunset, each snowmobile must be equipped with and display one or more headlights, a red rear light and a red rear reflector. Sleds or trailers attached to snowmobiles must have a red rear reflector. Snowmobiles must also be equipped with an adequate braking system.

Prohibited Operation

The following are some examples of prohibited operation:

- ◆ Operating under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- ◆ Operating on public ways, including plowed snow banks adjacent to public ways.
- ◆ Failure to come to a complete stop when crossing a public way (must yield to motor vehicle traffic)
- ◆ Operating at greater than minimum safe speed when within 50 feet of a foot traveler or horseback rider.
- ◆ Operating at an unreasonable, improper or unsafe speed for existing conditions.
- ◆ Operating on land of another without written permission of the owner.
- ◆ Operating within 150 feet of a residence without written permission of the owner.
- ◆ Operating on any public lands without a minimum of 4 inches of snow cover.
- ◆ Operating a snowmobile which emits noxious fumes or makes excessive noise.
- ◆ Carrying a firearm, rifle or shotgun in or on a snowmobile or attached trailer or sled unless the firearm is unloaded and in an enclosed case.

Violations

To report violations of snowmobile or recreation vehicle laws, or other environmental or wildlife laws, contact the Environmental Police Radio Communications Center at 1-800-632-8075.

Registration, Decals and Trail Permits

- ◆ Snowmobiles must be registered through the Massachusetts Environmental Police. Out-of-state snowmobile registrations are not valid in Massachusetts.
- ◆ Assigned registration decals must be displayed on both sides of the cowling in a clearly visible fashion. Validation date must be displayed on the left side.
- ◆ The registration certificate shall be in possession of the operator for examination by a law enforcement officer or landowner.
- ◆ Contact the Environmental Police for further registration information at (617) 626-1610, or visit www.mass.gov/dfwele/dle/elereg.htm
- ◆ When operating a snowmobile on property other than your own without written consent, you must display a valid Snowmobile Association Trail Permit. For additional information on trail permits and snowmobile clubs, contact the Snowmobile Association of Massachusetts (SAM) at (413) 369-8092 and www.sledmass.com

Trail Etiquette

Observing trail etiquette is important, particularly when trails are heavily used. Whenever possible, all snowmobiles shall keep to the right side of trails. Stay within the trail corridor and respect adjacent private and public land. When passing skiers, hikers, horseback riders, and other such trail users, operators shall reduce speed, yield right-of-way, and not pass until it can be accomplished with complete safety. Operators shall not accelerate until beyond 50 feet of such trail users.

Riding Area Information

The state Department of Conservation & Recreation has designated areas and trails for snowmobile use. For additional information, contact DCR at (617) 626-1250 and www.mass.gov/dcr

Accidents

The operator or owner of a snowmobile involved in a collision, accident or other such casualty resulting in death or injury to a person or damage to property in excess of \$50.00 shall notify a law enforcement officer immediately and file a written report of the incident with the Massachusetts Environmental Police within 48 hours. To obtain report forms or further safety/legal information contact the Boat & RV Safety Bureau at (508) 759-0002 or www.mass.gov/dfwele/dle/boatrvsafe.htm